

presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / MARCH 2026

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CHURCH STAFF

Deacons

deacons@fpcholland.org

Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor and Head of Staff
cathy@fpcholland.org

Paul Van Kempen

Associate Pastor and
Director of Music
paul@fpcholland.org

Lori Lepard

Administrative Assistant
office@fpcholland.org

Marlene Field

Bookkeeper
Marlene@fpcholland.org

Lori Klinesteker

Clerk of Session &
Children's Ministry Leader
lori@fpcholland.org

Jane Oosterhouse

Custodian
jane@fpcholland.org

Thom Samuelson

Maintenance
thom@fpcholland.org

Sue Stock

Communications
sue@fpcholland.org



Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

Season of Lent

Through this Lenten season, we have imagined together with God, considering the concepts of:

Resistance (the temptations of Jesus), as when Jesus demonstrated his strength in the wilderness, refusing to comply with the world's temptations of power and fame and self-satisfaction. We know that God offers a different way, a way that leads to wholeness for all people.

Disruptive Blessing (the sermon on the mount), as when we heard Jesus' words about loving our enemies. We are reminded that though we may not live in fear, it is possible that our neighbors do. How can we transform our communities so that all may know peace?

Holy Confrontation (the Canaanite woman), as an outsider challenged Jesus to expand his understanding of God's table! With humor and creativity, the unnamed woman, desperate for her child's healing, pushed back against the limitations Jesus proposed. What do we learn from this? Where have we placed boundaries where God has not?

Faithful Leadership (the good shepherd) Do we know how to recognize the voice of the true shepherd? Are we able to discern the voices that do not lead us to life? Faithful leadership is protective, courageous, and sacrificial in its loving. How will you lead? Whom do you follow?

True Allegiance (render to Caesar) Though some tried to trick Jesus with a question of allegiance, Jesus models faithfulness through concrete acts of justice, care, and resistance to false choices. We celebrate that all creation belongs to God!

We will encounter the sacred protest of Palm Sunday, the risky mercy of Maundy Thursday, the sorrow of Good Friday...all leading to the fulfillment of God's unbounded imagination: Easter resurrection. New life where once there was death.

The mystery of Easter is the ultimate imaginative act of our God of love.

May our humanity connect us to the risen Christ, the symbol of miraculous possibility.

May our imaginations be energized by the Spirit.

May our hearts be strengthened by God's vision of a world renewed!

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Blessings,
Cathy



Rev. Dr. Paul Van Kempen
Associate Pastor
and Director of Music

Walking the Labyrinth

On March 26, we hosted a labyrinth education and walking event in our Fellowship Hall. If you couldn't attend, you might still be wondering what a labyrinth is—and why someone would walk one.

A labyrinth is not a maze. There are no wrong turns or dead ends—just a single, winding path that leads to the center and back out again. Rather than something to solve, it's a path to follow. For centuries, Christians have used labyrinths as a way to pray with their whole selves. One of the most well-known examples is found in Chartres Cathedral, where it served as a kind of symbolic pilgrimage.

Walking a labyrinth is simple, and many people think of it in three movements:

- Release (walking in)—letting go of distractions and becoming present.
- Receive (at the center)—pausing, praying, or simply resting in stillness.
- Return (walking out)—carrying something with you as you re-enter daily life.

Along the way, the path will twist and turn. Sometimes you may feel like you're moving away from the center, even when you're not. That's part of the experience—and part of the invitation to trust the path.

We are fortunate to have a labyrinth right here in our church. You're welcome to come and walk it anytime. If you're planning to stop by, you may want to check with the church office first to make sure the space isn't being used for something else (preschool gym day might be a bit distracting for your prayer walk!).

It's a simple practice, but sometimes the simplest paths are the ones we most need to walk.

Peace,
Pastor Paul





Lori Klinesteker
Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

Jesus Blesses the Children – Mark 10: 13-16;
Following the story in Worship Center, our kids (Pre-K – 2nd grade) wrapped prayer shawls around them as they shared what it might have felt like if they were in Jesus arms; they said “it would feel snuggly; warm; kind of safe; like these blankets... can we keep them on?”.



City of Jerusalem – The 3rd – 5th Worship Center has been on a journey through the season of Lent, our children have been learning about the City of Jerusalem and its special place in the story of Easter. Through stories, they are beginning to understand how Jesus’ journey led Him to Jerusalem—a path filled with love, sacrifice, and hope. Along the way, they are discovering that Lent is not just about looking back, but also about preparing our hearts for the joy of Christ’s resurrection.

It has been a blessing to witness their curiosity and growing faith as they connect these important moments to their own lives.

We look forward to continuing this journey together and celebrating the hope of Easter.

Lori Klinesteker,
Children’s Ministry



W.C. and Youth Education Time:

April 5 – Easter Sunday (Worship Center & Youth do not meet)

Easter Sunrise Service 6:30am

Easter Breakfast 9am

Easter egg hunt 9:30am

Easter Worship Service 10am

April 12 - Spring Break
(Worship Center & Youth do not meet)

May 24 – We Meet! Last time for the summer.

Peace Camp - June 22 – 26, 2026. Save the week.



Presbyterian Women

Finding our identity in Jesus Christ in the PW Lesson 8 in April is focused on Remembering Jesus' Baptism. It helps us to connect our story to his, and speaks to his charge to us to serve faithfully, justly, and lovingly. Our own baptism stories are different and we usually cannot remember our own, except from the remembering of others. Here is a story...

My own Aunt Neenie – so named because I couldn't say Anna Aleene – had no children of her own. So, after WWII when my folks had moved to Detroit and were having their first baby, she sent a delicate ivory silk long coat and bonnet for my baptism in a now-closed Detroit Presbyterian church. It is almost 77 years old. Carefully cleaned and put away, that sweet little garment was used for my sister, mine and her babies, and then for my grandchildren. I have kept it for future use if this tradition holds into a 4th generation. It symbolizes in a tangible way that we are God's children and promises our commitment to Christian



Baptism of Christ
by Vladimir Zaginov

discipleship. Even as we worship online from Florida, I see our children and grandchildren among the congregation. We are blessed to see our next generations in FPC Holland for almost 40 years, "walking the mile and bearing the load" with so many other dear Christians, responding to our Good Shepherd. And another Greek word. "Metanoias" means to turn or reverse, in essence through baptism we are in covenant with God, where he gives us a new life, guarding and nurturing us. Wow!

Lesson 8 is packed with the story of John the Baptist and Jesus' baptism, and highlights our study of "Finding our Identity in Jesus Christ" and responding to the call to participate in Christ's mission in the world. There are so many ways we shine our lights in this busy world. As my spouse often capsulizes God's command: "Feed my lambs."

Janet Magennis,
PW Communications

All women of the church are welcome to join the Miriam Circle on Wednesday, April 8 at 9:30 am in the Michigan Room for sharing this Lesson

GET THE LATEST NEWS from PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

We are adding more content on our Facebook page! // Facebook: **FPCHollandPW**

Online: PresbyterianWomen.org

<> Holy Week & Easter Sunday <>



Maundy Thursday Service, April 2 at 6pm // Join us for a simple meal of soup and bread and an intergenerational service that will include an opportunity to follow Jesus' example of service through the washing of one another's hands and feet.

Easter Sunday, April 5 // April 5 - Easter Sunday

6:30am - Sunrise Communion service in the FPC Memorial Garden

9-10am - Easter breakfast, *All are Welcome!*

9:30am - Easter egg hunt

10am - Worship with Communion

<> Connect Together <>

Men's Book Group // We meet at FPC the second Monday of each month at 2:30p in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is April 13 discussing, *Gales of November* by John U. Bacon.

Grief Support // We meet at FPC the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2pm in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is April 22. We are a small group that gathers for grief support...we listen, we share, we pray. The group is open to all who need a safe space as they journey with grief. Contact Cathy with any questions. All are welcome.

Men's Discussion Group // We meet at FPC every other Friday morning at 7:30am in the M&M Cafe. Future meeting dates are planned for April 3 and 17. Join us! Contact Ross Hamlin 616-399-0509 or Bob Gansen 269-753-7024 if you have any questions.

Women's Book Study // We meet at FPPC the second Sunday of each month at church at 1pm in the M&M Cafe. Our next meeting is April 12 discussing the book, *The Nature of Fragile Things* by Susan Meissner.. Contact Bev Plagenhoef at rbplagen@live.com if you have questions.

Common Threads Group // We meet at FPC the third Monday of each month from 1-3pm in the Ontario room. Our next meeting is April 20. We hope that "Common Threads" reflects the fact that all are welcome. Many of us are crocheting or knitting prayer shawls, hats, scarves, and chemo socks. Feel free to come and work on other needlework or crafts or just come for the fellowship! Come and go as you are able. We hope you'll join us!



Habitat for Humanity // Next Habitat for Humanity workdays are scheduled for April 9 and May 14. Reach out to Bill Haines with questions, wehaines@icloud.com

<> Session Report <>

The Session held its regular monthly meeting on March 17th at 7pm.

The primary work accomplished at this meeting was unanimous support for the Finance Council's decision to pay off the mortgage!

The success of the second capital campaign as well as our overall financial stability have made this possible.

<> Community Events <>

First Reformed Church of Holland (Right across the street!) is starting a new service, "Prayers for Peace". Join us the first Monday of each month beginning **April 6** from 5:30-6:00pm. We invite members of other churches and the wider community to come together to pray for peace in our world, in our country, our communities, our churches, and our lives. All are welcome!

Holland Community Theatre // Join us for the next HCT play on Saturday, **April 11** at 7:30pm to see "Suite Surrender". It is a fast-paced farce full of old-world glamour and nonstop laughs. A delightful homage to screwball comedy where the only thing louder than the headlines is the drama. Optional dinner at the Curraugh at 5:30pm. Sign up in the lobby.

Community-Wide Song & Prayer // Celebrating together the International Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. "There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling." Ephesians 4:4 . **Sunday, April 19** at 5pm at Maranatha Church (918 Central Ave, Holland) For more information, visit Christians United in Song & Prayer (CUSP) online.



Escape Ministries // If you need help with a project and want to give youth a job, hire a youth team from Escape Ministries to do it!

We show up with a truck, an adult team leader, a team of youth to fit the size of your project, and most of the tools needed for spring or summer projects - weeding, mulching, cleaning, moving, or whatever else you need. Inquire at escape-out.org/hire or 616-396-4481 x210.

<> Happenings Around FPC <>

Presby What? // Would you like to learn more about the Presbyterian Church (USA), or about First Presbyterian of Holland? Curious about membership at FPC? Join us on Sunday mornings (4/12 - 5/3) at 11:15 - 12:00 in the sanctuary for an opportunity to learn about the history, theology and mission of the PC(USA) and FPC. Questions? Contact Cathy at cathy@fpcholland.org. Sign up in the Narthex.

Rev. Doug Brouwer invites you to join him for:
Faith Speaking Into Crisis: What does the church say when it can no longer be silent?

The church does not confess its faith in a vacuum. The great Reformed confessions of the modern era were forged in moments of crisis — when the comfortable formulas of routine religion were no longer adequate, when the gospel itself was at stake — not unlike today.

Each of the documents studied in this series was the church's answer to the question: What do we say in this moment?

Session 1) The Barmen Declaration (1934),

Session 2) The Confession of 1967,

Session 3) The Belhar Confession (1986), and

Session 4) The Accra Confession (2004)

Class runs: April 12 - May 3 in the Michigan Room. Virtual option will be available.

Justice Reads // Justice Reads Book Group is currently reading, *The Color of Compromise* by Jemar Tisby. Grab a copy and plan on joining the conversation on **Thursday, April 30th** at 7pm in the M&M Cafe. For more info, contact Jan Brashler or Cathy Hoop.

Save the Date // As you start to make plans for the summer, consider joining us at Mystery Creek Campground for our paddle weekend, **July 10-12**. Come and camp or come for just the day - paddle or just hang out with us. It's a wonderful way to spend time outdoors growing friendships and having fun! Watch for more details.

4 Week Spring Taiji Class // Discovering the Health & Balance Benefits of Taiji (tai chi)
Taiji is a natural exercise to do and is one of the most effective workouts today to enhance mobility, improve balance while bringing relaxation. Taiji is an uplifting healing exercise for the Body & Mind promoting overall health & well-being. Known as an internal martial art, taiji has evolved over the years into an effective way to relieve stress and anxiety because it promotes relaxation and now well known for improving balance on many levels. It is an exercise for every age.

What: Four Week Spring Taiji (tai chi) Class

Dates: Tuesday April 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th

Time: 5:30pm - 6:15pm

Location: FPC

Cost: \$40.00 includes access to free online practice and lesson videos

Questions: chris@timefortaiji.com

or call 616-541-5933

Gilmore Car Museum Visit! // Once again the First Presbyterian Men's Group is sponsoring a visit to the Gilmore Car Museum on **Wednesday, May 13th**. The feature display this year will be GM Motorama Marvels from the Joe Bortz Collection!

We'll meet at church at 8am and take the church bus to the museum (Thank you Jon Kreple!). Should be back to the church around 5pm. Admission for the day is \$20. Also bring money for lunch and \$10 for gas for the bus. This is open to anyone interested who wants to go, not just the Men's Group. There are 3 motorized carts available to rent for \$30 (first come first serve) and 4 wheelchairs for those needing assistance.

Questions? Please contact Bob Gansen at (269)753-7024 or robert.s.gansen@charter.net. Sign up in the Narthex

Peace Camp // June 22 - 26, 2026. Save the week. Watch for more information.



first
presbyterian
church

659 STATE STREET
HOLLAND, MI 49423

*Worshipping, serving, and living with a fresh
vision of God's vibrant energy and grace for all.*